TWO LETTERS

Written in the Year 1689.

BY THE

Right Reverend Father in GOD,

The Present Lord Bishop of *Rochester*,

To the Right Honourable

The Late Earl of *Dorset*,

CONCERNING

His Sitting in the Ecclesiastical Commission in the Reign of K. JAMES II.

LONDON,

Printed in the Year M.DCC.XI.

BRITISH MUSEUM

The First LETTER *from the Biſhop of* Rocheſter *to the Earl of* Dorſet *and* Middleſex, *&c.*

My LORD,

I Think I ſhou'd be wanting to my ſelf at this time, in my own neceſſary Vindication, ſhou'd I forbear any longer to give my Friends a true Account of my Behaviour in the late Eccleſiaſtical Commiſſion. Tho I profeſs, what I ſhall now ſay, I only intend as a reaſonable Mitigation of the Offence I have given, not entirely to juſtify my Sitting in that Court; for which, I acknowledg, I have deſervedly incur'd the Cenſure of many good Men; and I wiſh I may ever be able to make a ſufficient Amends to my Country for it.

Yet thus much, my Lord, I can juſtly alledg for my ſelf, That the Commiſſion was made, and my Name put into it, altogether without my knowledg; when I happen'd to be at *Salisbury*, holding an Archiepiſcopal Viſitation with the Biſhop of *Chicheſter*, and other Commiſſioners: Where, by God's Bleſſing, we compos'd ſeveral old Differences and Animoſities, and reſtor'd Peace and Unity to that Church.

At my return from thence to *London*, I found I was appointed to be one in a new Commiſſion: But I cou'd never ſee a Copy of it, nor did I ever hear its Contents, or know the Powers granted in it, till the time of its being publickly open'd at *Whitehall*; whither I was ſent for, on purpoſe, in haſte, that

very Morning, from my Houſe in the Country; being juſt come home from a Confirmation, and from paying my Duty to her *Royal Highneſs* the Princeſs of *Denmark* at *Tunbridg*.

Upon the firſt publiſhing the Commiſſion, I confeſs, thro my Ignorance in the Laws, I had little or no Objection in my Thoughts againſt the Legality of it; eſpecially when I conſider'd, that having paſt the Broad Seal, it muſt needs, according to my Apprehenſion, have been examin'd and approv'd by the King's learned Council in the Law, Men generally eſteem'd of eminent Skill in their Profeſſion. Beſides, I was farther confirm'd (tho too raſhly I grant) in my Error, when I ſaw two Gentlemen of the Long Robe, Perſons of the greateſt Place and Authority in *Weſtminſter-Hall*, join'd with us; who, I ſhould have thought, would never have ventur'd their Fortunes and Reputations, by exerciſing a Juriſdiction that was illegal.

And I believ'd I had reaſon to conclude, that this very Argument might prevail alſo with ſome others of the Temporal Lords that ſat among us: Particularly the Earl of *Rocheſter* has often aſſur'd me, 'twas that which induc'd him to accept of the Commiſſion; and that he did it, as I my ſelf did, with a purpoſe of doing as much Good as we were able, and of hindring as much Evil as we poſſibly could, in that unfortunate Juncture of Affairs.

As for my own part, I was ſtartled when I perceiv'd my Lord of *Canterbury* ſcrupled to be preſent with us; whoſe Example, 'tis true, I ought rather to have follow'd than the greateſt Lawyers in all Matters of Conſcience. Yet I hope his Grace will excuſe me, if I declare, that I did not at firſt know he made a Matter of Conſcience of it. Nor did I underſtand his Grace took Exception at the Lawfulneſs of the Commiſſion it ſelf, till after my Lord of *London* was cited, and had appear'd and anſwer'd, and the unjuſt Sentence was paſt againſt him.

For it was on the very day the Commiſſion was open'd, immediately, as I remember, after it was read, that my Lord of *London* was inform'd againſt

for

for not ſuſpending Dr. *Sharp*: Which, tho it exceedingly ſurpriz'd me at firſt, yet obſerving with what Heat the Proſecution was like to be carry'd on againſt him, that very Conſideration did the more incline me to ſit and act there, that I might be in ſome Capacity of doing Right to his Lordſhip. And whether I did him any Service thro the whole Proceſs of his Cauſe, I leave it to my Lord himſelf to judg. That I gave my poſitive Vote for his Acquittal, both the Times when his Suſpenſion came in queſtion, I ſuppoſe I need not tell the World.

Having thus, in the beginning of that Court, and the higheſt Ferment of it, freely diſcharg'd my Conſcience, by endeavouring to clear my Lord of *London*, I muſt own I thenceforth unawares took a Reſolution, which, how hurtful ſoever it may now prove to my ſelf, yet, I am ſtill apt to believe, did the Church of *England* no Diſſervice in the Main. My Deſign, by continuing longer among them, was to make ſure of one Vote at leaſt, and to do my Part, to the utmoſt of my ſmall Intereſt and Ability, to leſſen the Blow which I fear'd was coming on the Clergy, ſince it could not altogether be avoided.

And I was the more perſuaded to take this Courſe, not only becauſe the Legality or Illegality of the Commiſſion ſeem'd at firſt rather a Moot-caſe, than a determin'd Point either way; divers of the principal Lawyers, as I was told, being divided in their Opinions concerning it; but alſo becauſe I ſaw ſome other Perſons were ready to fill my Chair there, as ſoon as it ſhould be empty; Men of whoſe Principles and Practices I was ſo well aware, that I knew they would not have the ſame regard as my ſelf for the Churches Preſervation. And perhaps I might add this further for the Extenuation of my Fault, that I was not diſcourag'd by ſome grave and worthy Perſons, for this very purpoſe, to keep in ſome longer time; but I forbear to name them, that I may not involve any good Man in my Infelicity.

However, upon theſe Motives I acted, and, in purſuance of this Deſign, God knows, I voted as long as I remain'd at the Board; where all my Opi-

nions

nions were ſo contrary to the Humour of the Court, that I often thought my ſelf to be really in as much hazard from the Commiſſion it ſelf, by my not complying, as any of my Brethren could be that were out of it.

I appeal to all that were acquainted with the Tranſactions there, whether ever I gave my Conſent to any irregular or arbitrary Sentence; whether I did not conſtantly and firmly declare againſt every extravagant Decree. I could almoſt preſume to affirm, that I was, as far as in me lay, ſome way or other, a common Solicitor, or Advocate for all that were unjuſtly proſecuted before them. And I might exemplify this beyond all Contradiction, if I ſhould enumerate every particular Cauſe that came under their Cognizance.

After my Lord of *London* was ſentenc'd, his Lordſhip knows, I was always upon the Watch to obſtruct all farther Proceedings againſt him: Nay, his Lordſhip well remembers, I had once obtain'd to have his Suſpenſion taken off, if he would but have made an ordinary Submiſſion.

Then I was zealous for *Exeter-College*, in their Defence againſt Father *Petre*, in a Buſineſs of ſo great Importance, that if the College had been overcome in the Suit, that whole Society muſt ſoon have been abandon'd to Popery.

I did my utmoſt to oppoſe the violent Perſecution upon the whole Univerſity of *Cambridg*, when the Vice-Chancellor was ſuſpended his Office, and his Maſterſhip of *Magdalen-College*; becauſe a Popiſh Prieſt, who was one of the Miſſionaries to pervert the Scholars, was deny'd a Degree in their Convocation.

I faithfully aſſiſted and ſerv'd *Chriſt-Church* in *Oxford*, when they were in danger of having new Statutes impos'd upon them, which would infallibly have laid open that Royal College, to the Ruin of their good Learning and Religion.

I abſolutely reſiſted all the Alterations in the Statutes of *Sidney-College*, and all other Changes and Abrogations of Oaths, that were then made or deſign'd

ſign'd in the Statutes of either Univerſity, for the advantage of Popiſh Prieſts and Students, and for the freer courſe of *Mandamus*'s in their Favour.

I ever gave my Advice for all ſorts of Buſineſs, to be return'd into the common courſe of Juſtice; as that all Eccleſiaſtical Matters ſhould be refer'd back to the ſeveral Biſhops from whoſe Dioceſes the Complaints were brought; and that all Informations againſt Colleges and Hoſpitals ſhould be recommitted to their proper Viſitors.

I perſiſted unmoveable in my Diſſent from every Vote that paſs'd againſt *Magdalen-College* in *Oxford*; from their very firſt Citation before that Court, to the cruel incapacitating of the Preſident and Fellows.

I could mention many other Particulars, wherein I ſucceſsfully labour'd to relieve divers of the inferior and greater Clergy from Oppreſſion; to prevent ſome from being call'd before us at all; to preſerve others after they were accus'd by malicious Sycophants and Informers, that ſwarm'd then every where: Some in the Caſe of Tythes; ſome for preſſing Churchwardens to take legal Oaths; ſome for not reading, ſome for preaching againſt the King's Declaration.

But there are two eminent Inſtances, which I cannot omit. The one, that when the Biſhop of *Lincoln* was petition'd againſt by his Archdeacon, and there was, at that time, Inclination enough in the Court to purſue him to Extremity; yet my Lord Biſhop of *Peterburgh*, by interceding for him with the King, and I with the Commiſſioners, ſo effectually wrought, that the Proſecution againſt him was diſcountenanc'd and fell to the Ground.

The other Inſtance concerns my Lord of *Canterbury*; and I am confident his Grace will readily give me this Teſtimony, That I ſerv'd him honeſtly and induſtriouſly on ſome occaſions, wherein he was like to be embroil'd with the Commiſſion; which muſt inevitably have ended in his Grace's Suſpenſion at leaſt, ſince he was reſolv'd, whenever he ſhould be brought before them, whatever the Pretence had been,

been, to deny the whole Power and Jurisdiction of the Court.

As for the last Scene transacted there, which was in order to censure the whole Clergy, for refusing to read the Declaration: In that I hope I need say nothing in my Defence, it being publickly known to the whole Nation, how I then demean'd my self; how I broke loose from the Commission in a time, when I was convinc'd I could do the Church no farther Service there, and when the Popish Party was in the height of their Power and Rage. Then it was that I join'd my self again to the common Interest of the honest Clergy, just when they were on the very Brink of Destruction, before we ever dreamt of this Glorious Deliverance.

This is certain, that my leaving and defying the Commission at that time, did apparently exasperate the Popish Priests, and the Ringleaders of the Jesuitical Faction against me, to the highest Degree imaginable. Nay, some worthy Men have made me almost so vain as to fancy, that my bidding the Commission then Farewel in so publick and peremptory a manner, was no inconsiderable Stroke towards the Dissolution of the Commission it self. It is evident, that immediately upon the receipt of my Letter, wherein I renounc'd them, they adjourn'd in Confusion for six Months, and scarce ever met afterwards.

Thus far I am sure, my perpetual Behaviour therein was so much all of a-piece, so directly against the Vogue of the Court, and the Counsels of Popery then prevailing; and the Effects of it did so visibly destroy my former Interest with the King, that whereas it is manifest I was, when the Commission began, in as fair a probability as any Clergyman in *England*, to receive great Effects of his Majesty's Favour; yet after my opposing my Lord Bishop of *London*'s Suspension, and my other Votes conformable to that, I fell by degrees under his severe Displeasure.

I might add moreover, that it is very probable, I was at last in more imminent Danger than any of

my

my Brethren; I ſay, my Lord, than any of my Brethren, the ſeven petitioning Biſhops, and my Lord of *London* only excepted; whoſe Merits and Sufferings, in aſſerting our Laws and Religion, were ſo conſpicuous, and by conſequence the Fury of the Papiſts againſt them ſo implacable, that perhaps it would be Preſumption in any other Clergyman, much more in me, to come in competition with them for either of thoſe Honours.

Upon the whole Matter therefore, tho as to the legal part of the Commiſſion, which belong'd to Lawyers to judg of, I was miſtaken, for acting in it at all: Yet in the conſcientious Part, which properly concern'd me as a Divine, to act in it honeſtly and ſincerely, according to the beſt of my Judgment; in that, if I ſhall not be thought to deſerve Thanks, yet I hope I may obtain Pardon from all Men of Candour and Ingenuity.

My Lord, I know your Lordſhip's Generoſity and tender Concern for your Friends, whereof I have had ſo much experience, will excuſe me for troubling you with this my long Confeſſion and Apology, for my ſhare in the Eccleſiaſtical Commiſſion. I wholly ſubmit it to your Lordſhip's Prudence and Kindneſs, to make what uſe of it you pleaſe in my behalf. Only this I will ſay, that if I had as good a Cauſe for you to plead, as I have in your Lordſhip a Patron to defend me, I ſhould not have an Enemy in all *England*.

My LORD, I am

Weſtminſter, *Febr.* 21. 1688.

Your Lordſhip's moſt Faithful, Humble and Obedient Servant,

Tho. Roſſen.

The Bishop of Rochester's *Second* LETTER *to the Right Honourable the Earl of* Dorset *and* Middlesex, *&c.*

My LORD,

I Cannot in good Manners make my Address to your Lordship in another Letter, without premising my most humble Thanks for your favourable Acceptance of the former; and for your kind Recommendation of my Plea to Men of Honour and Goodness, by the powerful Authority of your approving it.

And now, my Lord, since you have in so generous a manner admitted me once to be your Client, I am come again to put my whole Cause into your hands. For it was my Chance, I know not how, to have such a share in one or two other publick Affairs of the late Times, as obliges me to make a second Defence: Tho I have always thought, that, next to the committing Offences, nothing can be more grievous to an ingenuous Mind, than to be put upon the necessity of making Apologies.

However, upon the Encouragement your Lordship has given me, I take the boldness to say, that in the Matters about which I trouble you this once more, I trust I have good ground for an honest and open Vindication of my self. The one was, my part in King *Charles* the Second's Declaration, touching the Conspiracy; the other was, my acting in the

the Commiſſion for the Dioceſs of *London*, during the Suſpenſion of my Lord Biſhop.

But then, my Lord, after my Apology, I ſhall crave leave to add that which needs none, I mean an Account of what paſt between King *James* and ſome of the Biſhops, a little before the late wonderful Revolution; which tho the Circumſtances of it are not ſo generally known as they ought to be, yet, I am ſure, had a very conſiderable effect for the benefit both of Church and State, in that critical time; and therein I may preſume to ſay, that I had ſome part: So that when I come to that, perhaps I ſhall be able ro ſpeak more freely, and ſhall venture to inſiſt upon it, as a manifeſt proof to the World, that the Biſhops had then as difficult a Poſt to maintain, and maintain'd it as firmly, as any other Order of Men in the Kingdom could do theirs, for preſerving the Liberties and Properties of the Subject, as well as the Intereſt of the Proteſtant Religion.

Firſt, my Lord, as for the Book of the Conſpiracy, 'tis true, I have often heard that ſome noble and eminent Perſons, whoſe Kindred or Friends were unhappily concern'd in the Subject of that Hiſtory, had entertain'd a prejudice againſt me thereupon. But to them I ſhall make this equitable Requeſt, that they would ſuſpend any farther Cenſure of me for what I did write, till they ſhall be fairly inform'd how much there is that I have not written.

I will not deny, that it was at the Requeſt, or rather the Command, of King *Charles* the Second, that I drew up a Relation of that Plot: And to that end, I had free liberty to conſult the Paper-Office and Council-Books, whence I was plentifully furniſh'd with ſuch authentick Materials, either of Papers printed by Authority, or of ſworn Depoſitions and Confeſſions, as have been always thought the beſt ground for an Hiſtorian to work upon.

But now, my Lord, I can ſtill alledg, that tho a vaſt heap of ſuch Matter was immediately ſupply'd to my hands; and tho I often receiv'd earneſt Meſſages, and ſome ſharp Words from that gentle King

to quicken my Slowneſs, yet more than twelve Months had paſt before I could be brought to put Pen to Paper; out of my natural Averſion to any Buſineſs, that might reflect ſeverely upon any Man: my own Inclination rather leading me to the other Extreme, that is, rather to commend too much what in the leaſt ſeems well done, than to aggravate what is ill done by others.

However, upon King *Charles*'s frequent Commands, and continu'd Importunity, I did at length obey; and the rather, becauſe I had formerly ſomewhat incur'd that King's and his Brother's Diſpleaſure, by my declining to write againſt the States of *Holland*, during the time of the firſt and ſecond *Dutch* Wars.

Being thus over-perſuaded, I made my Collections, and preſented them to that King: Which his Majeſty having himſelf perus'd, was pleas'd to direct me to put them into the hands of the Lord Keeper *North*, who carefully read and corrected what I had done, and added divers matters of Fact, which had eſcap'd my Obſervation.

Thus the Work ſtood in Preparation for the Preſs, when the deplorable Death of that King happen'd. And ſhortly after King *James* the Second calling for the Papers, and having read them, and alter'd divers Paſſages, caus'd them to be printed by his own Authority, as is to be ſeen before the Book.

But now, my Lord, I can truly declare, that during my compoſing thoſe Collections, I earneſtly requeſted King *Charles* the Second (and your Lordſhip knows, as well as any Man, how agreeable ſuch a Requeſt was to the benign Temper of that King) I requeſted him, I ſay, that few or no Names of Perſons ſhould be mention'd, whatever probable Suggeſtions might be againſt them, but only ſuch, upon whom publick Judgment had paſs'd, which it could be to no purpoſe for me to conceal.

I could indeed have wiſh'd, that my Lord *Ruſſel*'s, and ſome other Names of Perſons of Honour, might have been of the Number to be omitted, upon that very account; but 'twas none of my fault that they were not. I could not hinder, nor did I in the leaſt

contribute

contribute to their Fall: Nay, I lamented it, especially my Lord *Russel*'s, after I was fully convinc'd by Discourse with the Reverend Dean of *Canterbury*, of that noble Gentleman's great Probity, and constant Abhorrence of Falshood; but that was a good while after. All that I did, was the publishing, or rather indeed the putting together methodically, what before was sufficiently publish'd in printed Papers that were licens'd: And out of them to draw the Substance of a Declaration of State, in Vindication of that which the Authority of the Nation, at that time, call'd, The Publick Justice of the Kingdom.

But, my Lord, to return to what I was saying, King *Charles* having granted my Desire of concealing divers Names, according to this Allowance I proceeded, leaving out some, and abbreviating others; endeavouring all along to spare Parties and Families, and particular Persons, as much as would be allow'd. All which may be demonstrated from the Copies of the Depositions, as they went out of my hands, where there were several Names visibly mark'd by my own Pen, to be pass'd by in the Publication. So that if some indifferent Man should now compare the Informations as they are in Print, with the Originals in the Secretary's, or the Paper-Office, he would, it may be, be apter to suspect me of Connivance, than of Calumny on that side.

If I have now given your Lordship any Satisfaction touching my fair Dealing in my Part of that Book, I doubt not but what follows will give you more; when I shall assure you of my having refus'd to write a Continuation of the same History. For, my Lord, it was some time after the Duke of *Monmouth*'s Overthrow and Execution, that K. *James* the Second requir'd me to undertake such another Task, and presently to set about a Second Part. To that purpose his Majesty gave me a sight of multitudes of Original Letters and Papers, together with the Confessions of several Persons then taken in *England* and *Scotland*: who did indeed seem all to outvie one another, who should reveal most, both

of

of Men and Things relating to the old Conſpiracy, as well as to the Duke of *Monmouth*'s, and the Earl of *Argyle*'s Invaſion.

But finding the Innocence of divers Perſons of Worth and Honour touch'd in thoſe Papers, and by that time beginning vehemently to ſuſpect things were running apace towards the endangering of our Laws and Religion, I muſt ſay, I never could be induc'd by all his Majeſty's reiterated Commands, to go on with that Work. Inſtead of that, tho I had all the Materials for ſuch a Narrative within my Power, for above three years, and might eaſily have finiſh'd it in a month or ſix weeks ſpace, yet I choſe rather to ſuppreſs and ſilence, as much as I could, all that new Evidence; which, if openly produc'd, would have blemiſh'd the Reputation of ſome honourable Perſons.

Give me leave, my Lord, only to add, That I am confident there are ſeveral Original Papers ſtill in being, which would be more than enough to convince all impartial Men, how moderate and tender I was in that Cauſe.

Next, my Lord, having mention'd my being concern'd in the Commiſſion for the Dioceſs of *London*, in that I had the good Fortune to be join'd with an excellent Perſon, my Lord Biſhop of *Peterborough*. And we can both truly ſay, that as we enter'd into that Commiſſion with my Lord of *London*'s good Will, ſo we acted nothing in it without the greateſt Reſpect to his Intereſt.

It is well known we continu'd all his Officers in the full Profits and Privileges of their Places. We faithfully maintain'd the Rights of his Biſhoprick, and once in the King's own Preſence, againſt his Majeſty's expreſs Inclinations, in a Buſineſs of no leſs Concernment than my Lord Mayor's Chappel. We never invaded any of my Lord Biſhop's Preferments, that fell void in that Interval; we diſpos'd of none but according to his own Directions. We us'd his Clergy with the ſame affectionate Care and brotherly Love, as he himſelf had done; who was, on that account, as dear to them, as any Biſhop in *Chriſtendom* was to his Dioceſs.

And

And we appeal to them, whether we might not rather expect their Kindneſs and Thanks, than ſuſpect their Ill-will for all our Tranſactions with them. Nor can this be thought a vain Boaſt to any Man, who ſhall ſeriouſly reflect on the terrible Aſpect of Things from Court upon the *London* Clergy, during the whole time of our exerciſing that Juriſdiction. The remembrance whereof makes me not doubt to affirm, that if my Lord Biſhop of *Peterborough* and I had not then ſtood in the Gap, but ſome other Perſons, who were prepar'd to be thruſt in, upon our leaving that Commiſſion, had got it abſolutely into their Power, 'tis poſſible the moſt learned and pious Clergy in the World had been ſomewhat otherwiſe imploy'd than they were; and had been too much taken up in defending themſelves from the violent Perſecutions of the Popiſh Party, to have leiſure to confute and triumph over the Popiſh Cauſe; as they entirely did in their admirable Writings, to the Glory and Eſtabliſhment of the Church of *England*.

My Lord, to the Truth of what I have here ſaid concerning the Commiſſion of *London*, I have the Biſhop of *Peterborough* ready to atteſt. I ſhould indeed be glad I could claim as juſt a ſhare in another of his Lordſhip's meritorious Services to the Publick, as I may do in this: But in that I cannot; for 'tis evident the ſeven Biſhops, whereof he was one, had ſuch an opportunity put into their Hands, by God's Providence, for the Overthrow of Popery and Arbitrary Power, by their Sufferings for delivering their Senſe of King *James* the Second's Declaration, as 'tis likely never any of the Epiſcopal Order had before, and, 'tis to be hop'd, will never have again.

This however I will ſay, I had certainly added my ſelf to their Number, if I had then underſtood the Queſtion, as well as I did afterwards upon their Tryal, where I was preſent, in order to be a Witneſs in their behalf, at the ſame time your Lordſhip and many other noble Lords were there, to give countenance to ſo good a Cauſe.

There

There it was, my Lord, that I was first convinc'd of the false Foundations and mischievous Consequences of such a Dispensing Power, as that on which the Declaration was grounded: So that I have ever since been persuaded, that from that Petition of those Bishops, so defended by the invincible Arguments of their learned Council on that day, and so justify'd by the honest Verdict of their undaunted Jury on the next Day; from thence, I say, we may date the first great successful Step, that was made towards the rescuing of our Laws and Religion.

For my part I must own, I was so fully satisfy'd by the excellent Pleadings of those great Lawyers at that Tryal, that I confess I never had till then so clear a Notion, what unalterable Bounds the Law has fix'd between the just Prerogatives of the Crown, and the legal Rights of the Subject. And therefore from that very Day I hasten'd to make what Reparations I could for the Errors occasion'd by my former Ignorance; and to act for the future, what I always intended, as became a true *Englishman*.

Nor was it long after, that I met with a signal Opportunity to put this my Purpose in Practice: For perceiving the Rage of the Popish Party against the Church of *England* was rather heighten'd than abated, by my Lords the Bishops being acquitted; and fearing the Ecclesiastical Commission was next to be imploy'd, to wreak the Papists Revenge on the Orthodox Clergy, when *Westminster-Hall* could not do it, I presently resolv'd to desert that Commission, from whence I had often before labour'd and intreated in vain to be fairly dismiss'd: And immediately I sent the Commissioners the following Letter, whereof your Lordship may remember I then presented you with a Copy; as knowing how much you would be pleas'd, with my other Friends, at my forsaking that Board upon any Terms.

To

To the Right Honourable my LORDS, His Majesty's Commissioners for Ecclesiastical Affairs, &c.

My LORDS,

I *Most humbly intreat your Lordships favourable Interpretation of what I now write, That since your Lordships are resolv'd to proceed against those, who have not comply'd with the King's Commands in reading his Declaration, it is absolutely impossible for me to serve his Majesty any longer in this Commission. I beg leave to tell your Lordships, that tho I my self did submit in that Particular, yet I will never be any ways instrumental in punishing those my Brtthren who did not. For, as I call God to witness, that what I did was merely upon a Principle of Conscience; so I am fully satisfy'd, that their Forbearance was upon the same Principle. I have no reason to think otherwise of the whole Body of our Clergy, who, upon all occasions, have signaliz'd their Loyalty to the Crown, and their zealous Affections to his present Majesty's Person in the worst of Times. Now, my Lords, the Safety of the whole Church of* England *seeming to be exceedingly concern'd in this Prosecution, I must declare, that I cannot, with a safe Conscience, sit as Judg in this Cause, upon so many pious and excellent Men: With whom, if it be God's Will, it rather becomes me to suffer, than to be in the least accessary to their Suffering. I therefore earnestly request yonr Lordships to intercede with the King, that I may be graciously dismiss'd any farther Attendance at your Board, and to assure his Majesty, that I am still ready to sacrifice whatever I have to his Service, but my Conscience and Religion.*

My LORDS,

I am your Lordships most Faithful,

Bromley,
Aug. 15.
1688.

Humble and Obedient Servant,

C Tho. Roffen.

Your Lordſhip ſeeing what I have ſaid in this Letter, concerning my ſubmitting in that Buſineſs of the Declaration, upon a Principle of Conſcience, as I then thought, you may expect my Reaſon for doing ſo.

I muſt frankly confeſs, I had then a Doubt in my Mind, ariſing from a Rubrick in the Common-Prayer (which is, as much as any other, a Law of the Land) whether a Biſhop could lawfully deny the reading of whatever the King ſhould ordain to be read in Churches. And 'twas merely upon that miſtaken Scruple of Conſcience, I was induc'd not to oppoſe that Command of the King in Council; I ſay, not to oppoſe it: Farther than that, I ſtill ſay, I went not in that Buſineſs. For it is moſt true, that the Orders of Council, for publiſhing that Declaration in Churches, were diſpers'd thro the Places of my Juriſdiction immediately from the King's Printing-Houſe, without my Injunction, or ſo much as my Knowledg.

And after they were ſent abroad, tho I did not, 'tis true, revoke them, as not being then well determin'd in the Caſe, yet I no where inſiſted to have them obey'd. Nay, both in my own Dioceſs of *Rocheſter*, and in that of *London*, where I had then very unwillingly ſome Inſpection, there is no one Clergyman can upbraid me for urging any Man to read, or reproving any for not reading the Declaration.

If it ſhall be objected, that I permitted it to be read in *Weſtminſter-Abby*, I deſire it may be alſo conſider'd, what dreadful Apprehenſions this Royal Church and School were then under, from our Neighbours the Jeſuits at Court; who lay in wait to take any Advantage, whereby they might ſtir up the King to ruin us. Beſides that a *Quo Warranto* was then actually iſſu'd out againſt us, and we were every day threaten'd, that as we were the neareſt, ſo we ſhould fall the firſt Prey into the hands of the Popiſh Prieſts.

But to go on; I need not remind your Lordſhip what Wrath and Indignation this Letter to the Commiſſioners

miſſioners produc'd againſt me from the Jeſuited Party at Court; for which yet I eſteem'd my ſelf abundantly recompens'd by the Peace it gave me in my own Mind, and I hope I may ſay, by the good Will it reviv'd towards me in the Hearts of good Men; eſpecially of my Lord Archbiſhop, and the other perſecuted Biſhops, with whom I ever after acted in perfect Conjunction for the Publick Good.

That, my Lord, is the laſt Particular whereof I promis'd to give your Lordſhip an Account. And I come to it more chearfully than I did to the reſt, becauſe this is the only matter of all I undertook to ſpeak of, wherein I am not conſcious to my ſelf, that I need any Excuſe.

It was therefore ſome time after the Tryal of the Seven Biſhops, and after my leaving the Commiſſion, when upon the King's ſudden return from *Windſor*, and the firſt Alarm given of the Preparations in *Holland*, my Lord of *Canterbury*, and ſome of his Suffragan Biſhops, whereof I had the Honour to be one, were ſent for by expreſs Letters dated *September* the 24th, to attend his Majeſty at *Whitehall*. Accordingly, all of us that were in Town, except my Lord Archbiſhop, who was then very ill, waited on the King the *Friday* following, being the Day appointed. But little or nothing paſſing betwixt his Majeſty and us, at our firſt Attendance, beyond general Expreſſions of his Favour and our Duty, we intreated my Lord of *Canterbury* to procure for us a ſecond and more particular Audience; wherein we might all deliver our plain and ſincere Senſe of Things, as we ſaw the dangerous Condition of the Church and State then requir'd from Men of our Character. And on the *Sunday* after, my Lord Archbiſhop obtain'd of the King, that we ſhou'd be admitted to a full Liberty of Speech with him the next *Tueſday* Morning.

All *Monday* we ſpent at *Lambeth*, in preparing the humble Advice we thought fit to offer the next Day. But the King being otherwiſe accidentally diverted on *Tueſday* Morning, our Attendance on him was put off till *Wedneſday*. Whereas, had we

been admitted to his Majeſty that *Tueſday*, we cou'd not have fail'd of getting ſome Credit to our ſelves, and to the Church, for having requeſted him to reſtore the Charter of *London* among other Charters. For from the very beginning of our Conſultations, we had fix'd upon that to be one of our principal Petitions. Whereof his Majeſty, perhaps, having had ſome private Intimation, thought it more for his Service to prevent us, by making it an Act of his own Grace. This is certain, that very *Tueſday* in the Evening, he firſt declar'd publickly in the Council, to divers eminent Citizens, his Purpoſe to reſtore the City Charter. So that when we came the next Day, we found nothing left for us to do towards that great Affair, but only to turn our intended Requeſt into Thanks, as we did.

However, on *Wedneſday* Morning we had our ſecond Audience; when my Lord of *Canterbury* deliver'd our free and honeſt Advice, with ſuch a becoming Meekneſs, Gravity, and Courage, as indeed was admirable.

Now, becauſe there has been hitherto only an imperfect Relation printed of what paſſed at that Meeting; I think it may not be unacceptable to the Publick, to give here an exact Account of our whole Proceedings with the King in that Affair, as it was drawn up by my Lord Archbiſhop himſelf. And it had been happy, if all Addreſſes to his Majeſty had been alike faithful to the King's and the Kingdom's Intereſt.

For

For his Grace the Lord Archbiſhop of *Canterbury*.

My Lord,

THE *King thinking it requiſite to ſpeak with your Grace, and ſeveral others of the Biſhops, who are within a convenient Diſtance of this Place; his Majeſty commands me to acquaint you, That he wou'd have you attend him upon* Friday *next, at Ten in the Morning.*

My Lord,

I am your moſt Faithful, *&c.*

Whitehall, Sept. 24. 1688. *Sunderland* P.

Letters to the ſame purpoſe, and of the ſame date, (or about that Time) were ſent to the Biſhops of *London*, *Winchester*, *Ely*, *Chichester*, *Rochester*, *Bath* and *Wells*, *Peterborough*, and *Briſtol*; all which (but *London* and *Briſtol*) came to Town; and all but the Archbiſhop waited on the King at the time appointed. The next day, the Biſhop of *Winchester* went out of Town; and the day after that, the Archbiſhop waited upon the King alone: and by his Appointment, on *Wedneſday*, *Octob.* 3. all who remain'd in Town went together to his Majeſty; to whom (in the Name of the reſt) the Archbiſhop ſpake as followeth.

May it pleaſe your Sacred Majeſty,

WHen *I had lately the Honour to wait upon you, you were pleaſed briefly to acquaint me with what had paſs'd two days before, between your Majeſty and theſe my Reverend Brethren: by which, and by the Account which they themſelves gave me, I perceiv'd, that in truth there paſs'd nothing, but in very general Terms, and Expreſſions of your Majeſty's gracious and favourable Inclinations to the Church of* England, *and of our reciprocal Duty and Loyalty to your Majeſty: both which were ſufficiently underſtood and declar'd*

The Biſhop of Bath and Wells.

declar'd before: and (as one of my Brethren then told you) wou'd have been in the ſame State, if the Biſhops had not ſtir'd one Foot out of their Dioceſes. Sir, I found it griev'd my Lords the Biſhops to have come ſo far, and to have done ſo little; and I am aſſur'd, they came then prepar'd to have given your Majeſty ſome more particular Inſtances of their Duty and Zeal for your Service, had they not apprehended from ſome Words which fell from your Majeſty, that you were not then at Leiſure to receive them. It was for this reaſon that I then beſought your Majeſty to command us once more to attend you all together: which your Majeſty was pleaſed graciouſly to allow and encourage. We are therefore here now before you, with all Humility, to beg your Permiſſion, that we may ſuggeſt to your Majeſty ſuch Advices as we think proper at this Seaſon, and conducing to your Service, and ſo leave them to your princely Conſideration. Which the King being pleaſed graciouſly to permit, the Archbiſhop proceeded as followeth. *Our Firſt humble Advice is,*

I. *That your Majeſty will be graciouſly pleaſed to put the Management of your Government in the ſeveral Counties, into the Hands of ſuch of the Nobility and Gentry there, as are legally qualify'd for it.*

II. *That your Majeſty will be graciouſly pleaſed to annul your Commiſſion for Eccleſiaſtical Affairs; and that no ſuch Court as that Commiſſion ſets up, may be erected for the future.*

III. *That your Majeſty will be graciouſly pleaſed, that no Diſpenſation may be granted or continu'd, by virtue whereof, any Perſon, not duly qualify'd by Law, hath been, or may be, put into any Place, Office, or Preferment, in Church or State, or in the Univerſities, or continu'd in the ſame, eſpecially ſuch as have Cure of Souls annex'd to them: And in particular, that you will be graciouſly pleaſed to reſtore the Preſident and Fellows of St.* Mary Magdalen *College in* Oxford.

IV. *That your Majeſty will be graciouſly pleaſed to ſet aſide all Licences or Faculties already granted, by which any Perſons of the Romiſh Communion may pre-*

tend

tend to be enabled to teach publick Schools: and that no such be granted for the future.

V. *That your Majesty will be graciously pleased to desist from the exercise of such a Dispensing Power as hath of late been used; and to permit that Point to be freely and calmly debated and argu'd, and finally settled in Parliament.*

VI. *That your Majesty will be graciously pleased to inhibit the four foreign Bishops who stile themselves* Vicars Apostolical, *from farther invading the Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction, which is by Law vested in the Bishops of this Church.*

VII. *That your Majesty will be graciously pleased to fill the vacant Bishopricks, and other Ecclesiastical Promotions within your Gift, both in* England *and* Ireland, *with Men of Learning and Piety: And in particular, (which I must own to be my peculiar Boldness, for 'tis done without the privity of my Brethren) That you will be graciously pleased forthwith to fill the Archiepiscopal Chair of* York *(which hath so long stood empty, and upon which a whole Province depends) with some very worthy Person: For which (pardon me, Sir, if I am bold to say) you have here now before you a very fair Choice.*

VIII. *That your Majesty will be graciously pleased to supersede all farther Prosecution of* Quo Warranto's *against Corporations, and to restore to them their antient Charters, Privileges, and Franchises, as we hear God hath put into your Majesty's Heart to do for the City of* London, *which we intended to have made otherwise one of our principal Requests.*

IX. *That if it so please your Majesty, Writs may be issued out with convenient speed, for the Calling of a free and regular Parliament, in which the Church of* England *may be secur'd according to the Acts of Uniformity; Provision may be made for a due* Liberty of Conscience, *and for securing the Liberties and Properties of all your Subjects; and a mutual Confidence and good Understanding may be establish'd between your Majesty and all your People.*

X. *Above all, That your Majesty will be graciously pleased to permit your Bishops to offer you such Motives*

tives and Arguments, as (we truſt) may, by God's Grace, be effectual to perſuade your Majeſty to return to the Communion of the Church of England, *into whoſe moſt holy Catholick Faith you were baptized, and in which you were educated, and to which it is our daily earneſt Prayer to God, that you may be reunited.*

Theſe (Sir) are the humble Advices which, out of Conſcience of the Duty we owe to God, to your Majeſty, and to our Country, we think fit at this time to offer to your Majeſty, as ſuitable to the preſent State of your Affairs, and moſt conducing to your Service, and ſo to leave them to your Princely Conſideration. "*And* "*we heartily beſeech Almighty God, in whoſe Hand* "*the Hearts of all Kings are, ſo to diſpoſe and govern* "*yours, that in all your Thoughts, Words, and Works,* "*you may ever ſeek his Honour and Glory, and ſtudy* "*to preſerve the People committed to your Charge, in* "*Wealth, Peace, and Godlineſs, to your own both* "*temporal and eternal Happineſs.* Amen.

We do heartily concur.	*W. Cant.*
	Fran. Ely.
	Jo. Ciceſtr.
H. London.	*Tho. Roffen.*
P. Wincheſter.	*Tho. Bath* and *Wells.*
W. Aſaph.	*Tho. Petriburg.*

It is for others Information, not for yours, my Lord, that I have been ſo punctual and minute in the Circumſtances of this Buſineſs, wherewith your Lordſhip was fully made acquainted, juſt after the very time, at *Copthall*, as much as my Lord of *London's* and my Memory cou'd ſerve us to do it.

But one thing farther I muſt obſerve as very remarkable in this Affair, That if the exact Time of this our Addreſs to King *James* at *Whitehall* ſhall be compar'd with the Day of the Prince of *Orange* his preſent Majeſty's ſetting forth his firſt Declaration in *Holland*, they will be found to bear very near the ſame Date. For our Addreſs here was form'd at *Lambeth*, on *Monday*, *October* 1. and ſhou'd have been

been deliver'd on *Tueſday* the 2d, and was actually preſented on *Wedneſday* the 3d: and that Declaration was ſign'd there on the 10th of *October*, which, conſidering the two Styles, makes little or no difference.

And if I might preſume to compare ſmall things with great, in the Matter of them as well as in the Date, I wou'd venture to ſay, that moſt of the very ſame Grievances which his Highneſs inſiſted on in his Declaration, except one or two that were too high for us Subjects to meddle with, were ſo early repreſented by us to the King in that Petition, as things neceſſary to be ſpeedily redreſs'd.

And, my Lord, I cannot but add, that this we did in a time when the King thought of nothing leſs than Victory; when in all human Probability, he was the ſtrongeſt both by Sea and Land; when as yet there was no appearance of ſuch a prodigious Alienation of his Subjects Affections; when at leaſt, his Army was thought to be ſtill firm to him; when the very Winds and Seas ſeem'd hitherto as much on his ſide, as they all afterwards turn'd againſt him.

After that, my Lord, as I remember, the next ſolemn time of our waiting on King *James* II. was occaſion'd by the interception of the Prince of *Orange*'s Declaration here in *London*, ſome ſhort time before his Highneſs's Landing: For upon reading that Expreſſion in it, "That the Prince was moſt earneſtly "invited hither by divers Lords both Spiritual and "Temporal, and by many Gentlemen, and "others of all Ranks;" the King forthwith ſent for ſome of the Biſhops, who were neareſt at hand, and requir'd us to juſtify our ſelves to the World, as to our part in that Invitation. To this end, his Majeſty fix'd a ſhort Day, whereon he oblig'd us to preſent him a Paper under our Hands, ſignifying our Abhorrence of the Prince of *Orange*'s intended Invaſion.

My Lord, the Day came, and great Throngs there were at Court, expecting the Iſſue of that Conference. We ſaw both the Friends and Enemies

of the Church of *England* equally impatient to know what we wou'd do in that difficult Moment. The King himſelf had affirm'd to us, He thought his good Succeſs exceedingly depended upon our ready compliance with his Command of Abhorring. A Declaration was then in the Preſs againſt the Prince of *Orange*, the preſent King, and was only ſtop'd for our Paper of Abhorrence to be inſerted into it: and there happen'd to be but four of our Number, my Lord of *Canterbury*, my Lord of *London*, my Lord of *Peterborough*, and my ſelf, who were preſent upon the Place, to endure that terrible Brunt.

In ſhort, as ſoon as we were come into the King's Preſence, his Majeſty, with great Earneſtneſs, call'd for our Paper. We, with all Submiſſion, intreated to be excus'd from writing any thing of that nature, and from making a particular Defence to a general Accuſation, leſt we ſhou'd give the firſt Precedent of that kind, againſt the *Privilege* of *Peers*. Beſides that, our Profeſſion being to promote Peace, we thought it belong'd not to us to declare War, eſpecially againſt a Prince ſo nearly ally'd to the Crown.

But the King ſtill more inſiſted, argued, and expoſtulated with us; inſomuch, that if ever in all my life I ſaw him more than ordinary vehement in Speech, and tranſported in his Expreſſions, it was at that time.

However, we ſtill made good our humble * Refuſal, in as dutiful Terms as 'twas poſſible: among

* *The Biſhops of* Scotland, *on the contrary, were drawn into a Declaration, abhorring the Invaſion of the Prince of* Orange, *and renouncing the Principles on which it was founded; which prov'd ſuch a Snare to them, that they cou'd not in honour act in Parliament after the Revolution, but deſerted the Service of their Church and Country, and left the Management of both entirely to the Presbyterians, who then made uſe of the Opportunity, and eſtabliſh'd themſelves by Law, purely by the Abſence of the Biſhops from Parliament. So that as the* Engliſh *Biſhops refuſing to ſtand by the Doctrine of* Paſſive Obedience, *ſav'd Epiſcopacy in* England; *ſo the* Scotch *Biſhops adhering to that Doctrine, deſtroy'd Epiſcopacy in* Scotland. *The Declaration of the* Scotch *Biſhops is printed in the Appendix.*

many

many Arguments, urging chiefly, That as we were join'd with our Brethren, the other Lords Spiritual, and with the Lords Temporal, and with the Gentry of *England*, in the Accuſation; ſo we beſeech'd him, we might not be ſeparated from them in our Juſtification: concluding all with an earneſt Requeſt to his Majeſty, That he wou'd be pleaſed to condeſcend to the calling a free Parliament; wherein only he cou'd rightly underſtand what was the general Senſe and true Intereſt of the whole Kingdom.

At laſt, when neither the King wou'd hearken to our zealous Motion for a Parliament, nor we cou'd be prevail'd on to ſubſcribe an Abhorrence of the Prince of *Orange*'s Deſign, his Majeſty parted from us with Indignation. And thereupon, the Jeſuited Party at Court were ſo violently enraged againſt us, that, as we were credibly inform'd, one of the Chief adviſed in a Heat, we ſhould all be impriſon'd, and the Truth ſhould be extorted from us by Violence.

I told your Lordſhip, the Concluſion of that our ſerious Debate with the King, was, on our Side, the begging him to call a free Parliament. The Truth is, a free Parliament was the main Point, and the laſt Reſult of all our Requeſts to his Majeſty; from the firſt Day of his admitting us to give him our honeſt Advice, till the Time of his leaving the Kingdom.

I need not put your Lordſhip in mind of the Petition, we preſented him to the ſame Purpoſe, which was ſign'd by divers of the Spiritual and Temporal Lords, and, among others, by your Self; and was afterwards ſeconded from ſeveral Parts of the Nation; eſpecially by the Noblemen and Gentlemen aſſembled at *York*; and by the Fleet under the Command of my Lord *Dartmouth*; and by the Lord Biſhop, and the Clergy, and the Citizens of *Briſtol*. As it had been alſo ſoon followed by the Reſt of the Kingdom, had there been time enough for the doing of it.

But having mentioned that Petition for a free and regular Parliament, I hope it will not be thought Preſumption in me, if I ſuggeſt, I had the Honour to have it conſider'd, agreed on, and ſign'd, at my Houſe at *Weſtminſter*: And that I was one of the four Biſhops (the two Archbiſhops, and my Lord of *Ely*, being the other three) who ventur'd to deliver it to the King; after we heard he had proteſted he would take it highly ill of any Man, that ſhould offer him a Thing of that Nature. Nevertheleſs we did it, and thought our ſelves bound, in Duty to God and Man, ſo to do.

Your Lordſhip perceives, all that I have ſaid on this laſt Subject, concerns only ſome few Particulars, that paſs'd in three or four Conferences, between King *James* the ſecond, and ſome of the Biſhops, who happen'd then to be within Call: Tho we had afterwards the Concurrence of our Abſent Brethren. And we may now appeal to all the World, whether we did not demean our Selves on thoſe hazardous Occaſions, with that Zeal againſt Popery, and for the Legal Eſtabliſhment both in Church and State, as became the Station we hold in both.

If your Lordſhip's leiſure would permit me to look farther back, and to recount what was written, acted, or ſuffer'd, by the Members of the Church of *England* in General, during that Reign; 'twere eaſy to recollect ſo many memorable Inſtances of unſhaken Truth and Courage, in the Nobility, Gentry, Clergy, and Commonalty of our Communion; in maintaining our Religion againſt *Rome*, and our Laws againſt unlimited Power; as might well furniſh ſufficient Materials for an ample Relation.

I know it was formerly a popular Objection of divers miſguided Diſſenters from the Church of *England*, That our Principles were too Monarchical, and that we carried the Doctrine of Obedience farther than might be conſiſtent with the Safety of a Proteſtant Church, or the Privileges of a free-born People.

But it is now to be hoped, that the ſtrongeſt Argument of all others, which is Experience from undoubted Matter of Fact, has put this Objection for ever out of Countenance. Since it is undeniable, that during that whole time, when our Civil and Spiritual Liberties were in ſo much Danger, the greateſt, and moſt conſiderable Stop, that was here put to the Arts of *Rome*, and Intrigues of *France*, was put by the ſteady Reſolution of the true Sons of the Church of *England*.

I pretend not to upbraid any Party or Sect among us, for any undue Compliance in that Time. But this I will aſſert, that generally ſpeaking, the whole Body of the Church of *England*, both Laity and Clergy, did not comply.

Nay, it were infinite to reckon up the Examples, we then ſaw every Day, of Men of all Conditions, from the higheſt to the loweſt, all Members of the Church of *England*; who preferred the ſaving of the eſtabliſh'd Government in Church and State, before any Temptations of private Profit or Intereſt.

Not to ſay any thing more of the learned and unanſwerable Writings of that Time againſt Popery; for in that Merit, I ſuppoſe none of any other Perſuaſion will enter into any Competition with the Orthodox Clergy: But I now only ſpeak of thoſe many honourable Self-denials, which the Church of *England* Men then practiſed, for the Sake of the true Engliſh Liberty, and Reformation.

What Officers and Commanders were there almoſt in the whole Army, beſides the Sons of the Church of *England*; who choſe to be diſcarded from thoſe very Troops and Regiments, which their own Intereſt and Money had raiſed, rather than contribute to take away the great Fences of our Liberty and Religion? What Officers in the Courts of Juſtice, and in the ſeveral Branches of the Revenue? What Members of Boroughs, Corporations, and Cities, in compariſon of thoſe of the Church of *England*, endured the Loſs of their

Places

Places of Truſt and Profit, for not conſenting to aboliſh the Teſts and Penal Laws againſt Papiſts?

What eminent Nobility and Gentry in all Counties, ſubmitted chearfully to be ſlighted, and deprived of all Authority and Power among their Neighbours, in Peace or War? Were they not generally, and almoſt to a Man, of the Church of *England*?

Was not a conſiderable Part of the Court turn'd out? Did not divers Perſons of the higheſt Titles and Dignities there, endure to loſe their Prince's Favour, upon this very Account? Did we not ſee the moſt advantageous and moſt honourable Offices, the very white Staves, and the greateſt of them, not valued, but eaſily parted with, when Religion came in Queſtion?

I need not go on to recite more particularly all theſe Things, eſpecially to your Lordſhip, who were your Self one of the noble Sufferers in the ſame Cauſe. 'Twill be ſufficient to affirm once for all, that the main Body of thoſe, who made ſo brave a Stand, were all of the Church of *England*; and the Principles on which they ſtood, were all Church-of-*England* Principles.

My Lord, it was by theſe Perſons, and theſe Principles, that Popery was ſtop'd in its full Career; by theſe it was then hindred from conquering, and put into a Condition to be ſhortly after conquer'd it ſelf in this Nation.

After having troubled your Lordſhip ſo long with my own private Cauſe, and having ſaid ſomething to, in the behalf of what is much more dear to me, the Publick; prav let me conclude with that, which, in this Juncture of Affairs, may be accounted well nigh another Publick Cauſe: Let me preſent you with my humble well-meaning Opinion, what Moderation is to be ſhewn towards thoſe, who happen'd to be employ'd in the late Times.

My Lord, 'twould be great Preſumption in me, having been my Self ſo far engag'd, to offer at an Apology for other Perſons concern'd then, either

with

with me in the Commiſſion, or in any other Publick Buſineſs; particularly for ſome of your Lordſhip's Acquaintance, whoſe Cauſe may be more defenſible than mine; and I am ſure their Abilities to defend it, are much greater: Only in general, I will take the Freedom to ſay, That I make no queſtion, but divers good Men, who were then in Employments, did in Prudence ſubmit to ſome things in order to hinder worſe. I doubt not, but many acted then, not to increaſe, but to mitigate the Violence of thoſe Times. Some were in ſuch Stations, which perhaps 'twas well done of them, not ſuddenly to deſert, leſt worſe Men ſhould come in, to do that which they deſign'd to prevent. I believe, ſome being, as it were, in the middle of the Stream, when the Tide turn'd ſo violently againſt our eſtabliſh'd Church and Laws, were driven down lower than they expected, before they could reſiſt the Current, or get to Shore. Wherefore, conſidering all Circumſtances, 'twas well ſo many miſtook not the true Intereſt of the Nation. 'Twas happy ſo many preſerv'd their Integrity; ſo many had the honeſt Hardineſs to ſtand unmoved by the Importunity of their King, whom they were bred up to honour, and in all Things elſe to obey.

And in common Senſe of human Frailty, are not many Infirmities at ſuch a Time as that, to be overlook'd now, by wiſe and good Men? Do not many falſe Steps ſo made, deſerve to be pitied? May it not be thought ſome kind of Merit, or ſome degree of Innocence at leaſt, not to have made more, in ſuch a ſlippery Ground as we then trod on?

If, my Lord, every failure of that Time ſhould be eſteemed a criminal Compliance, every Compliance ſhould be judg'd unpardonable; who then, that remain'd under the Government, can be counted Innocent? Who ſhall be able juſtly to throw the firſt Stone? What Place will be then left for the Offender's Hope, or for a Prince's Forgiveneſs, the nobleſt and moſt divine Part of Power?

My Lord, the conſtant Experience of all wiſe Times has ſhewed, That all Civil Diſſenſions and Quarrels,

Quarrels, are beſt ended by the largeſt Acts of Indemnity and Oblivion: In *England* eſpecially, where good Nature is ſoon apt to have Compaſſion upon the afflicted. Here perhaps ſcarce any thing can be more dangerous to the Party that is uppermoſt, than to put Engliſh Men upon pitying thoſe that ſuffer under it. And certainly this Revolution, if ever any, ſhould be mild in the Event, ſince it was Bloodleſs in the whole Courſe of it, in a Time, when there was moſt danger of Effuſion of Blood.

I will ſay no more, my Lord, but this, That after great and unexpected Changes, that hath been always found the firmeſt Settlement of any State or Government, where the prevailing Party hath look'd but very little backward, and very much forward; where private Animoſity and Revenge have wiſely given way to the greater Benefits of publick Pardon and Indulgence.

Perhaps, towards the Beginning of great Reformations, a warm impetuous Spirit may have its uſe; but to compoſe Things after ſudden Commotions, to calm Mens Minds for the Future, to ſettle Affairs in a ſecure and laſting Peace, moſt certainly a gentle, generous, charitable Temper is the beſt: And to ſay all in one Word, ſuch a Temper as is your Lordſhip's.

MY LORD,

Weſtminſter, *Mar.* 26. 1689.

I am your Lordſhip's moſt Faithful, Humble, and Obedient Servant,

Tho. Roffen.

BRITISH MUSEUM

FINIS.

APPENDIX.

The Letter of the Scotch Biſhops to King James.

May it pleaſe your moſt Sacred Majeſty,

WE proſtrate our Selves, to pay our moſt devote Thanks and Adoration, to the Sovereign Majeſty of Heaven and Earth, for preſerving your ſacred Life and Perſon, ſo frequently expos'd to the greateſt Hazards, and as often deliver'd; and you miraculouſly proſper'd with Glory and Victory, in Defence of the Rights and Honour of your Majeſty's Auguſt Brother, and of theſe Kingdoms: And that, by his merciful Goodneſs, the Ragings of the Sea, and Madneſs of unreaſonable Men, have been ſtill'd and calm'd; and your Majeſty, as the Darling of Heaven, peaceably ſeated on the Throne of your Royal Anceſtors, whoſe long, illuſtrious and unparallel'd Line, is the greateſt Glory of this your auncient Kingdom.

We pay our moſt humble Gratitude to your Majeſty, for the repeated Aſſurances of your Royal Protection to our *National Church* and *Religion*, as the Laws have eſtabliſh'd them; which are very ſuitable to the gracious Countenance, Encouragement and Protection, your Majeſty was pleas'd to afford to our *Church* and *Order*, whilſt we were happy in your Preſence among us.

We magnify the Divine Mercy, in bleſſing your Majeſty with a *Son*, and Us with a *Prince*, whom we pray Heaven may bleſs and preſerve, to ſway your Royal Sceptres after you; and that he may inherit, with your Dominions, the illuſtrious and heroick Vertues of his auguſt and moſt ſerene Parents.

We are amaz'd to hear of the Danger of an *Invaſion* from *Holland*, which excites our Prayers for an univerſal Repentance, from all Orders of Men, that God may yet ſpare his People, preſerve your Royal Perſon, and prevent the Effuſion of Chriſtian Blood; and to give ſuch Succeſs to your Majeſty's Arms, that all who *invade* your Majeſty's juſt and undoubted *Right*, and diſturb or interrupt the *Peace* of your Realms, may be diſappointed, and *cloathed with Shame*; ſo that on your Royal Head the *Crown may ſtill flouriſh*.

As, by the Grace of God, we ſhall preſerve in our Selves a firm and unſhaken *Loyalty*; ſo we ſhall be careful and zealous to promote, in all your Subjects, an intrepid and ſtedfaſt *Allegiance* to your Majeſty, as an eſſential Part of their *Religion*, and of the Glory of our Holy Profeſſion. Not doubting, but that God, in his great Mercy, who hath ſo often preſerv'd and deliver'd your Majeſty, will ſtill preſerve and deliver you, by giving you the Hearts of your Subjects, and the Necks of your Enemies. So pray we, who, in all Humility are,

(*May it pleaſe your moſt Sacred Majeſty*)

*Your Majeſty's moſt Humble, moſt Faithful, and moſt Obedient * Subjects and Servants.*

Edinburgh, Nov. 3. 1688.

Sign'd by

The Lord Archbiſhop of St. *Andrews*,
The Lord Archbiſhop of *Glaſcow*,
Lord Bp. of *Edinburg*,
Lord Biſhop of *Galloway*,
Lord Biſhop of *Aberdeen*,
Lord Biſhop of *Dunkel*,
Lord Biſhop of *Brechen*,
Lord Biſhop of *Orkney*,
Lord Biſhop of *Murray*,
Lord Biſhop of *Roſs*,
Lord Biſhop of *Dunblain*,
Lord Biſhop of the *Iſles*.

* Quære, *Whether in the Original it be not* Slaves and Vaſſals.

FINIS.

MUSEUM

In a few Days will be publiſh'd,

THE Hiſtory of the Eccleſiaſtical Commiſſion, in the Reign of King *James* II.

In a few Days will be publish'd,

THE Hiſtory of the Eccleſiaſtical Commiſſion, in the Reign of King James II.

MUSEUM